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ABSTRACT

Designed to keep educational practitioners informed of current trends and practices, this policy brief explores the changing identity of the nation's community colleges and presents four special inserts describing specific trends for the community college systems of California, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada, respectively. The brief reviews the traditional access to community colleges provided by the open-door philosophy, which led to rapid growth, a diverse student population, and ultimately a loss of cohesion in the curriculum as remedial programs gained emphasis. Two indicators of the current confusion over the colleges' identity are examined: the controversy over transfer, including the decline in students transferring and bureaucratic hindrances to transfer, and the rapid expansion of occupational education. Finally, the shift in funding and governance from the local- to the state-level is explored as a contributing factor to the changing identity, especially as it has limited educational access by the imposition of new fees and less direct community control. The two-page special inserts discuss responses of four state community college systems to the changes in funding, student demographics, faculty needs, and identity. The inserts include: (1) "Reform for the California Community Colleges," by Aileen Murdock; (2) "Community Colleges in Arizona: The Challenges and the Responses," by Virginia V. Stahl and Robert T. Stout; (3) "Utah's Community Colleges: A Time of Change," by Michael Murphy; and (4) "Nevada's Community Colleges: Portraits of Growth and Change," by Myrna Matranga. (MAB)

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SPECIAL INSERTS TO THIS ISSUE:

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Community Colleges: Reshaping an Educational Vision

Mary Amsler

Introduction

American community colleges are in the process of reshaping their identity. State policymakers are asking community college leaders to clarify institutional priorities within the context of rising costs and an increasing emphasis on accountability. Access and equity — the twin concerns which shaped community college policy decisions in the 1960s and 1970s — have been replaced in the 1980s by concerns for institutional effectiveness and efficiency. It is within this environment that community college leaders are re-examining whom the colleges should serve, what their goals should be, and how the colleges can change to serve their diverse clients more effectively.

This shift in goals for community college management presents important questions for policymakers to answer. Chief among these is the community college's relationship to other institutions of public education — colleges, universities, and high schools. In order to better understand how this shift in goals has occurred and how it affects the community college, this policy brief examines: 1) the traditional niche for community colleges in the system of public higher education, 2) factors which have altered this traditional role, and 3) current conditions that are prompting educational policymakers to reshape the role of community colleges for the twenty-first century.

Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development serves the four-state region of Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah, working with educators at all levels to plan and carry out school improvements. Part of our mission is to help state department staff, district superintendents, school principals, and classroom teachers keep abreast of the best current thinking and practice.

The Traditional Niche

Early community colleges, as direct extensions of high schools, had a clearly defined niche in the educational system. The institutional orientation was to the community. Funding came primarily from local property taxes while governance decisions were made by local school boards. Faculty, as former high school teachers, contributed to an institutional culture identified with community values. The mission expanded slowly in direct response to local needs.

By the 1930s, this mission contained three strands: 1) lower division preparation for university transfer; 2) terminal occupational education; and 3) general/community education. Through the 1950s the majority of students attended with aspirations to transfer to a four year college or receive occupational training.

The Open Door Policy Provides Access

The 1960s and the 1970s are commonly called "the golden era" for community colleges. The period was marked by the development of a powerful vision: the community college would be the "open door" into higher education for all Americans.

Supporters encouraged the construction of a community college within commuting distance of every population center in the United States. Fees and external requirements would be minimal. By the end of the 1970s, a community, technical, or junior college existed within reasonable commuting distance of more than 90 percent of all Americans. Over 1,222 accredited community, technical, and junior colleges presently are sprinkled throughout the country.

This open door policy resulted in extraordinary rates of growth in enrollment. From 1970 to 1982, enrollment in two-year colleges increased *215 percent* while four-year institutions experienced less than *18 percent* increase in growth. Approximately 4.7 million students presently are enrolled in credit classes in community colleges and another 4.8 million students attend non-credit, continuing education classes.

Student Diversity

Community colleges, more than any other segment of higher education, provide a college education for minority students and older women. Approximately 41 percent of Black, 56 percent of Hispanic, 45 percent of Asian, and 33 percent of white students who attend college attend a community college.

The number of women has nearly *doubled* from 1.5 million in 1972 to 2.6 million in 1988. Half of this increase is in women from the ages of 25 to 44. Many of these women are single heads of households.

The number of part-time students has also dramatically increased.

Until the early 1960s, the majority of students attended community colleges on a full-time basis. But from 1972 to 1982, the number of part-time students increased from 51 percent to 63 percent. Presently, in many urban community colleges 75 to 80 percent of the students attend part-time.

Diversity Creates Challenges

The community colleges had little time for clarifying institutional priorities during the growth period of the 1970s. Their challenge was simply to keep up with the demands of a rapidly growing and increasingly diverse student body. Major adjustments in the organization of support services, child care facilities, and financial aid arrangements were required. Increasing numbers of part-time students forced a re-organization of program format and scheduling. Remediation, not central to the traditional mission of the community college, became important. Courses proliferated in areas such as remedial English, basic math, and English as a Second Language in states with growing immigrant populations.

As a result, curriculum coordination and cohesion weakened, and support services could not keep up with student needs. The role for faculty was weakened by the increasing practice of hiring part-time teachers. Students found it difficult to establish ongoing relationships with their instructors because the faculty composition kept changing. Good teachers would be there one year and gone the next.

The community college began to lose its clear identity. Many community colleges became educational cafeterias, providing an intellectual smorgasbord without creating a balanced offering of programs or clear direction to entering students.

Problem Indicators in the 1980s

Today, many indicators signal a growing confusion over the community college identity. Two of the more visible indicators are *alterations of the traditional functions of transfer* and *occupational education.*

Decline in Transfers. The proportion of students who complete a two-year community college degree or transfer to a four-year institution within two-to-five years is quite low. During the 1960s approximately 25 to 35 percent of community college students transferred to four-year institutions. By the late 1970s the transfer rate had dropped to under ten percent. Estimates for the 1980s place transfer under eight percent in some community colleges.

The decline in the transfer function is especially alarming when considering the larger issue of educational access for minority students. Fewer and fewer minority students are transferring to four-year institutions. For example, in 1982, while the total number of community college transfers to the University of California system was 5,137, only 175 Blacks and 389 Chicanos were admitted. In other states with large minority populations such as Texas and New York, minority students remain concentrated in the community colleges. If the transfer function continues to be weak, minority students will end up ghettoized in two-year institutions with little hopes of access to a B.A. degree.

Controversy on Transfer Data. Controversy surrounds the data on transfer rates. Accurate measurements of the number of students who transfer are not available. Data systems need to be designed so that state by state longitudinal data on transfer rates is available. Part of the problem is a lack of uniformity among states regarding the definition of a transfer student. Confounding available statistics are students who take courses at a local community college and a university concurrently; who begin at a university, attend a community college, then return to a university; or who transfer from a community college to a university after one year.

Bureaucratic Hindrances. Two bureaucratic barriers hinder student success in transferring: (1) financial allocations and incentives, and (2) lack of articulation between two-year and four-year institutions. The financial hindrance is determined by the funding formulae used by the state. If community colleges are funded through a formula which rewards seat-time, then there is little incentive for colleges to program sequenced educational offerings or to offer a curriculum parallel to that of the university.

Most states' financial aid policies do not give aid for more than four years even though disadvantaged students often require more than four years to complete a baccalaureate degree. These policies also do not acknowledge that a student's need for assistance increases after transferring to a four-year college with higher tuition expenses.

The articulation agreements between the two-year and four-year institutions are major obstacles. The chief problems are discrepancies in the content, scope, and level of courses acceptable for transfer and recurring shifts in transfer course prerequisites.

Institutional Hindrances. Studies have shown that the devaluation of the transfer function occurs institutionally for most students. One problem is the lack of a clearly defined transfer program. Many community colleges have not developed such a program because different four-year institutions have different transfer requirements. The burden is placed on the individual student to develop his/her own program.

A second problem is staff development. Committed faculty is an important ingredient in creating a positive climate. Research has shown that if faculty expectations for students are low, then transfer aspirants can easily become community college dropouts. Policymakers are just beginning to tackle this issue of faculty renewal.

A third problem is support services. High student-teacher ratios in many community colleges and limited support services contribute to a negative climate. Students float in and out of courses with minimal guidance and little understanding of program sequences or career options.

factors which contribute to increasing dropout rates.

The Expansion of the Occupational Education Mission. The rapid expansion of occupational education programs is a second indicator of a growing confusion over identity. Historically, the collegiate transfer function held a dominant position in community colleges while occupational education enrolled fewer students. In 1972 approximately one-third of two-year students were enrolled in occupational education programs. By 1986, more than two-thirds of community college students were enrolled in occupational education programs.

The result has been a *transformation* of the community colleges in many states from institutions primarily offering college transfer courses to institutions primarily offering occupational education programs.

Expansion Without Information. Expansion has occurred with limited analysis of what the trend means. Programs have proliferated in response to the requests of local industry or institutional needs to attract students. Programs are designed without clear understanding of certain issues: Which occupational programs are effective? What core elements are necessary to provide education versus training? What are longer term effects on student occupational mobility?

Critics argue that graduates from occupational education programs are, at best, only slightly better off than high school graduates with no postsecondary education. *Supporters* argue the programs help students achieve specific occupational goals. They serve an important need for students not college bound but who need additional training to succeed in the work world. Both critics and supporters report that there has been a decline in the quality and funding of programs.

Before policymakers further invest in the expansion of occupational education, they need to consider several issues. One issue is cost. Effective programs require up-to-date technology and a current curriculum. Such requirements demand ongoing institutional investment. When this does not occur, programs become obsolete, and educational quality disappears.

The lack of a rigorous program in the high schools means students enter community college occupational programs underprepared. As a result they either drop out or the colleges are forced to dilute the technical core of their programs. "Two plus two" technical programs designed to integrate the last two years of high school with college programs are a right step in providing students with the background needed for success.

Community colleges and business must build an interlocking program which educates generalists, not technical specialists. Flexibility and adaptability should guide the development of a core curriculum. Collaborations between vocational and academic teachers must be encouraged to reinforce the development of skills.

External Factors Contributing to the Loss in Identity

Shifts in Funding. Community college financing has shifted from the local districts to the states. By 1985, 48 percent of the states contributed less than 4 percent of local funds to community college revenues. Federal support for community colleges also declined. In 1979, federal funds represented 7.3 percent of total revenues for community colleges. By 1985, that percentage had dropped to 2.6 percent.

The often uncertain level of state funding leaves community colleges unable to develop long range planning strategies. In 1987, 33 states reported problems. In the Western Region, California reports problems with inadequate funding,including lost revenue due to declining enrollments. Arizona reports funding problems for services geared to full-time students in a system that contains a majority of part-time students. Nevada reports problems with maintaining an administrative support staff given funding restrictions. A critical problem in Utah is adequate funding for institutional growth.

The funding question has shifted from whether or not to charge to how much to charge. The tuition average is $600 per year for community colleges, a 60 percent increase since 1979. These patterns in policy decisions have resulted in greater funding stability, but a dilution of the community college mission to provide access. Overall community colleges have: 1) increased dependency on student fees; 2) increased emphasis on user fees for programs in lifelong learning and community services; 3) increased reliance on private support beyond state funds; 4) and limited remediation programs.

Shifts in Governance. The governance of community colleges is no longer a local decision-making process. State budget officials, governors, and state coordination boards have begun to play a larger role. The Higher Education Amendments of 1972 accelerated the process of placing public supported colleges under the auspices of a single authority. By 1980, the number of states with state level community college governing boards increased to fifteen, five states had university systems which included two-year colleges, ten states had boards for all of higher education and fifteen states had state boards which coordinated all levels of education. Forty states have removed a substantial part of community college governance from local boards.

There have been clear advantages to increased state participation in governance. Funding is more equitable. More accurate data about individual colleges is available. Some states have developed sophisticated management information systems that can more effectively track enrollment trends, and programs offered by individual colleges. In states with a statewide process of articulation, the transfer process is more effective. States with unified community college boards are able to address their legislature with a single voice, so individual colleges no

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longer compete with each other for legislative attention.

An obvious disadvantage to the increased state role is that individual community colleges have lost their local autonomy. Instead they find themselves wrestling to maintain a semblance of control when numerous organized groups outside of the institution demand to play a more active part in decision-making.

In many states, the colleges need to develop an organizational structure which provides them more control over their own destiny. The balance which provides the state with needed accountability yet allows local districts to keep their identity as "community" institutions remains a central concern.

Where Do Community Colleges Go From Here

So, what role should the community college play? At issue for policymakers is how to shape a new identity for community colleges without re-creating similar problems a decade from now. As the community colleges realize that they can no longer afford to be all things to all people, choices must be made. Such actions are already occurring in states which have separated credit from non-credit courses or instituted a separate fee structure for community education programs.

If transfer is the main priority, community colleges must develop closer relationships with colleges and high schools. State policies need to be developed which create joint responsibility for articulation agreements between two-year and four-year institutions. The community colleges also need to expand their relationship with the high schools, helping the high schools better prepare students, and offering strategic help to students weak in certain areas.

If occupational education is the priority, then community colleges and local industries need to work together to design quality programs which are cost effective, prepare students for the marketplace, and provide them with the analytic skills required for survival in a changing economy. Currency issues, including the updating of technology and the retraining of faculty, need to be addressed collaboratively.

Remediation is vital. Without a realistically funded and clearly designed sequence of courses, underprepared students will continue to fail. Community colleges should not reproduce high school programs. Rather, they should serve as second opportunities. Remediation needs to be integrated into both the transfer and occupational education programs, so students are not isolated on a remedial track, heading nowhere.

Acknowledging the diverse needs of students, an extensive student support service system needs to be developed. This should include a network of services, such as community outreach, career counseling, program guidance, and financial aid counseling.

States need to develop funding formulas which allow community colleges to predict future resources and cover the cost of services offered. Remediation, support services, and up-to-date technology are no longer luxuries, but are necessities which need to be recognized in funding.

An appropriate governance structure is essential. With the shift from local to state control, adequate decision-making systems need to be developed which allow prompt responses to emerging needs. Community colleges also need to remain responsive to local needs, requiring institutional flexibility. The extent to which state authorities or local boards decide program priorities is a matter for each state and community college system. What is essential is a clear statement of the goals and responsibilities of each level.

A fuller treatment of this subject, Community Colleges: The Quest for a Clearer Identity, *by Mary Amsler, a Senior Research Associate, is available from Far West Laboratory.*

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Reform for the California Community Colleges

Aileen Murdock

Background

California's community colleges are an important part of the public higher education system. The 107 community colleges enroll approximately 1.3 million students. The colleges are authorized to offer associate degrees, certificate programs, and lower division courses for transfer. Approximately 65 percent of the credit students are enrolled in vocational courses; the remainder are enrolled in academic courses leading to transfer or degrees.

Governance of the California community colleges is a legacy of their K-12 origins. Each of the 70 districts has a locally elected governing board with fiscal and legal responsibility for the colleges within the district. Overlaid on this local governance structure is the state Board of Governors which serves as a state policy making board for the system.

Funding for the community colleges is driven by an enrollment-based formula, set by the Legislature. The 1988-1989 budget is $2.7 billion, or $3000 per student. Over the past decade, continued dissatisfaction with the funding mechanism has led to numerous changes in the formula.

Context of Reform

Reform began for the California Community Colleges with the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. With the shift in funding responsibility from local sources to the state, an increased scrutiny of the community college budget raised concerns over both educational quality and accountability. Criticisms that the colleges were offering frivolous courses at taxpayer expense, or that the "open door" was really a revolving door for students, began to appear in the press. By 1984, even staunch supporters of the system recognized the need for resolution to the crisis of confidence. Studies by the California Business Roundtable (1984) and the "watchdog" Little Hoover Commission (1985), recommended changes in governance, mission, faculty status, and funding of the colleges. The most thoroughgoing of the studies, "The Challenge of Change" (Commission for the Review of the Master Plan), laid the groundwork for the legislative blueprint contained in the Community College Reform Act (AB 1725), signed by Governor Deukmejian in September, 1988.

Shape of Reform Depends on Implementation

The Community College Reform Act represents the agendas of various interests. Many community college leaders sought to validate the existing mission; legislative critics saw an opportunity to improve the efficiency of the colleges; others sought to depoliticize the community colleges by shifting the locus of decision-making from the legislature to the community college system itself.

Discretion in how AB 1725 will be implemented and uncertainty of funding leave unanswered a number of questions about the likely effects of the bill. The elements of the bill to be implemented first and the pace of implementation are still to be decided. Hence, the extent to which the Reform Act can be said to forge a new identity for the community colleges is unclear.

Governance

The governance structure of community colleges emerged from the reform debate relatively unchanged. Early proposals to adopt a regional governance structure or to eliminate the seventy local governing boards were quashed during the 1985 review by the Master Plan Commission. The Commission recommended legislation to strengthen the state governing board without changing fundamental governance relationships. The legislation mandates a closer working relationship between the state board and the college districts. A complicated consultation system requires the participation of specific constituent groups within the colleges in policy decisions and sets up a review process for policy proposals which relies on consensus.

Mission

For the first time, the Community College Reform Act expressly designates the system as a postsecondary system of education. *Transfer* is stated as a top priority. The bill mandates that a common core curriculum for transfer students be developed and used by the University of California, California State University, and the California community college.

Vocational education continues to stand alongside transfer as a central function. In the reform legislation, recommendations for so-called "two plus two" programs to streamline the flow of vocational students from high schools into community college programs were adopted. Currency issues including the recency of instructor training and adequate funding for high cost vocational training programs are addressed indirectly through changes in the funding mechanism.

Remediation has a new emphasis in the mission statement. This priority acknowledges the large number of under-prepared students entering the colleges. Changes in California's demographics have had a greater impact on the community colleges than on the other segments of higher education. Presently, 75 percent of all Black and Latino students enrolled in higher education attend community colleges. Due to the dramatic change in the cultural and ethnic makeup of the state, the demand for basic skills,

remedial, and English as a second language courses is increasing.

Faculty Issues

The implementation of AB 1725 will change employment patterns in the colleges during the coming decades. The reform bill eliminates the state level credentialing system. The former "paper" certification by state office staff of qualifications for college teaching or administration was viewed as ineffective and inappropriate to higher education. The new system will rely on local colleges to determine qualifications within a framework of minimum qualifications set by the state community college governing board. Requirements that community college instructors and other staff be credentialed are repealed as of July 1, 1990, provided that funding for implementation is made available.

Hiring in the colleges will be affected substantially by the affirmative action requirements of AB 1725. The new law requires that by the year 2005 the community college work force will reflect proportionately the adult population of the state. In addition, the community college Board of Governors is required to take steps to assure that by 1992-93, 30 percent of all new hires are ethnic minorities. Support for this effort is to come from a new service function in the state Chancellor's Office to assist colleges in identifying and recruiting qualified members of under-represented groups.

Another hefty challenge, as a result of AB 1725, is the conversion of part-time faculty to full-time status in order to create a larger core of full-time faculty. The extensive use of part-time faculty who are paid only for instructional time, do not hold office hours, and do not participate in professional activities on the campus was a source of concern to the Master Plan Commission. The Reform Act requires that 75 percent of the faculty be full-time in order to guarantee a larger number of full-time staff to assume professional responsibilities. The price tag for this reform is estimated to be $40 million.

Requirements for the evaluation of part-time faculty, peer evaluation of full-time faculty, and lengthening the probationary period for faculty tenure from two to four years are additional faculty reforms that are dependent on new funding.

Funding Patterns

Alternatives to a funding system based on student enrollments has been discussed in state policy making circles since 1975. The inability of the statutory formula to be sensitive to actual program costs hampered the ability of the colleges to offer expensive, but needed, programs and created an incentive for large enrollment classes. The extreme enrollment sensitivity of the statutory formula also caused fluctuations in revenue to the colleges. Weaknesses in the formula resulted in legislative modifications five times between 1975 and 1983 in an attempt to correct perceived inequities related to size of the college and student composition.

AB 1725 shifts the basis for funding from an enrollment-driven to a cost-driven model, more in line with the funding of the University of California and the California State University system. The legislation identifies as a minimum set of funding categories: instruction, instructional services and libraries, student services, maintenance and operations, and institutional support.

With the implementation of "program-based" funding, the statutory formula will be eliminated. Like the other postsecondary segments, authority for developing the standards and criteria for system-wide funding will reside within the community college system itself. Policymakers hope to bring greater rationality and predictability to the funding process through this shift in the budget responsibility from the legislature to the community college system itself.

Funding for Implementation

Initial funding for the 1988-89 fiscal year is a very small proportion of the actual cost of the reform. The price tag for the entire reform proposal is $140 million. First year funding is $7.25 million with $5 million assigned to staff development and $1 million designated for a Faculty Diversity Fund, a first step toward reaching the affirmative action goal for the early 1990s. Implementation of the majority of the reforms are to be activated only as funding plateaus of "new" money become available. For example, a number of employment reforms are triggered only when funding for reform reaches $70 million. An additional $70 million is required before program-based funding will be implemented.

Conclusion

The Community College Reform Act (AB 1725) has strong support among state policymakers in Sacramento. The intense scrutiny of the California community colleges has resulted in a comprehensive piece of legislation designed to carry the colleges into the 21st century. Changes in governance, mission, staffing, and funding fix the community colleges more firmly in the postsecondary domain while allowing the colleges to remain responsive to an increasingly diverse student population. The pace of implementation, however, remains highly dependent on infusions of funds into the system. If the legislation is fully funded (at a cost of nearly $150 million), the community college system will be able to implement important reforms. Changes in governance will permit faculty a greater role in decision making, the mission will include a renewed emphasis on transfer, staffing patterns will more closely resemble the university, and program-based funding will provide more fiscal predictability. Until funding is made available, however, reform for the California community colleges must be viewed as still waiting in the wings.

Aileen Murdock is Director of Matriculation, Chancellor's office, California Community Colleges.

Community Colleges in Arizona: The Challenges and the Responses

Virginia V. Stahl and Robert T. Stout

Background

While community colleges existed in Arizona as early as 1888, the Arizona State Community College System was not created until 1960 by the Arizona Legislature. The creation of the System allowed community colleges to be funded in part from the general fund of the State. Previously, they were funded and governed completely within counties.

The Arizona State Community College System began operation in 1962 with a governing board appointed by the Governor and with two campuses, both of which existed as independent colleges prior to the creation of the System. Since 1962, 33 additional campuses or satellite campuses have been built in 9 of the 15 counties of the State. Total enrollment has grown from 10,000 students in 1964 to 126,000 students in 1988. The colleges which serve Maricopa (Phoenix) and Pima (Tucson) Counties enroll about 110,000 students of the total.

Governance

Though linked within the Arizona State Community College System, the community colleges are organized according to counties. Each county community college district has a locally elected governing board responsible for establishing local policies. The State Board of Directors for Community Colleges, whose members are appointed by the Governor, approves tuition and fee rates, curricula affecting more than one District, and construction plans. The Board also mediates disputes among the districts and submits a System budget to the Legislature. Thus, community colleges experience both local autonomy and statewide coordination. This permits the colleges to remain responsive to the specific needs of the county, but also to fit into the larger state system of higher education.

Access

One important difference between the urban community colleges and those in other counties is access to a community college campus. The majority of persons in urban areas live near a campus or satellite. In contrast, students in the rural areas must travel much greater distances. To serve students better, the rural colleges have established networks of extension centers throughout their service areas. In addition, they have made extensive use of telecommunication technologies for advising and instruction with students in remote areas of the state.

Funding Issues

The two major sources of revenue for community colleges are local property taxes and allocations from the state general fund. District property taxes account for 41 percent of the total operating revenue (about $260,000,000 in 1986-87).

Three funding issues have received and are currently receiving attention. The *first* is the higher property tax wealth in urban areas, allowing tax rates in these districts to be somewhat lower. The *second* is the effects of a 1980 election proposition which imposed constitutional expenditure limitations on government agencies. The amendment limits the amount of public tax dollars which community colleges can spend, and ties expenditures to the number of full-time equivalent students (FTE's). Two problems arise as a result of these changes. Head-count enrollment is much higher than FTE's enrollment, due to the large number of part-time students. Part-time students make demands on services perhaps in equal or even disproportionate rates when compared to full-time students. Secondly, revenue projections are based on prior year enrollments, creating revenue shortfalls for colleges with substantial enrollment growth. The *third* issue is a 1988 legislative decision to provide general fund subsidies for summer sessions, which had been previously self-supporting. The full effects of this change are not yet known, but the decision will require the community colleges to make adjustments in their funding procedures.

Student Profiles

Governor Mofford has said that community college students mirror the diverse population of Arizona. For example, Northland Pioneer College, in Navajo County, enrolls large numbers of Navajo and Hopi students. Yavapai College (Yavapai County) provides instruction to Havasupai students who live in a village at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. The campuses of the Maricopa County and Pima County Community Colleges serve highly diverse urban populations including large numbers of Hispanics and Blacks.

While student demographics are relatively stable among rural colleges, urban colleges are experiencing substantial shifts in the profiles of their students in attendance. For example, 51 percent of the students in the Phoenix Union High School District are now ethnic or racial minorities. The majority of these students, if they enter higher education, will enter by attending their local community college.

Community colleges are also attempting to serve adults of all ages who have widely diverse occupational and intellectual interests, with diverse working hours, and multiple needs for information. The colleges

must be prepared to address changes associated with significant changes in the client group if they are to remain true to their objectives of being truly "people-focused institutions." (Letter from Governor Mofford celebrating the 25th anniversary of the creation of the Arizona State Community College System.)

Institutional Responses to Changing Demographics

The Community Colleges have made a number of responses to the changes in their client groups. Extensive use is being made of distance learning technologies, including radio, interactive video and computer assisted technologies. Service centers have been constructed in off-campus locations. Cooperative arrangements have been struck with high school districts and among the colleges. Special programs have been developed for minority students, older students returning to college, displaced homemakers, limited English speakers, and other special populations. Short-term or occupationally focused programs have been developed in cooperation with businesses, other government agencies, and special interest groups.

A special focus is placed on recruiting, and graduating minority students. For example, the Maricopa Community College District and the Phoenix Union High School District are cooperating in an early identification and summer bridge program. Arizona State University is also expected to play a role in easing the transfer of students from community colleges. Partially supported by foundation grants, the program provides a rich mix of student employment, tuition help, tutoring, advanced courses, counseling and orientation, and parent involvement. Similar examples are found in the other colleges in the state. This is part of a growing recognition that the different segments of public education must work more closely together to support the continuing education of students.

Curriculum

Each district offers a comprehensive curriculum that includes a college transfer program, preparation for occupations or for occupational mobility, general education, and developmental education. Both the transfer and occupational curricula have undergone extensive review and modification in the past few years. Arizona's community colleges, like community colleges nationwide, are concerned with the effectiveness of both transfer problems and occupational programs in contributing to true educational and economic mobility for students. In response to the national concern about educational excellence, the community colleges and the state universities have revised liberal arts curricula to include more interdisciplinary courses, critical thinking, mathematics, and communication skills. A schedule has been established for the periodic review of all occupational programs in order to determine costs, effectiveness, and currency.

Articulation

Community colleges are working with high schools and universities in the state to establish better links with curricula. For example, high school students enrolled in certain vocational programs receive advanced placement in similar community college programs. Community college and university faculty in selected disciplines meet routinely to discuss and develop community college and lower division university courses. Equivalent courses are published in an annual version of the Course Equivalency Guide, published by the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education. Current discussions focus on the creation of an electronically accessed guide, and the possibility of electronic transfer of student transcripts across segments of public higher education. Additional efforts are producing a set of agreements by which students from the community colleges can transfer large blocks of credits to the universities. The development of stronger partnerships with both secondary schools and colleges is an on-going objective for the community colleges throughout the state.

Conclusion

Community colleges in Arizona are continuing to be responsive to their environments. They have endeavored to address problems with creative, flexible solutions. As society changes, the community colleges continue to change also. They have recognized the ongoing challenges and are continuously seeking creative ways to respond. They are concerned with issues of access, equity and excellence. These issues will remain primary to Arizona as new populations demand to be provided educational services in wide array. Through technology and increasingly cooperative relationships with both high school districts and the state university system, Arizona's community colleges are meeting the needs of the state's diverse populations.

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Utah's Community Colleges: A Time of Change

Michael Murphy

Introduction

Utah's community colleges are a vital force in the public higher education system. Located in diverse areas of the state, educating almost a third of the students in the first two years of post-secondary education, providing substantial skills training for non-college bound students, and serving as a direct link to a bachelor's degree for others, the community colleges play an integral role in educating the youth of Utah. In the past few years, the mission of the community colleges has been expanded, and made more uniform across campuses. The colleges have become more directly integrated into the higher education network of the state. These actions guarantee a central role to community colleges in the future.

Historical Context

The five community colleges in Utah all predate the half century mark with the oldest founded in 1888 and the last in 1947. The three oldest colleges, College of Eastern Utah, Dixie College and Snow College are located in outlying areas of the state, and originally served as junior colleges providing lower division college course work closer to home. The two other institutions, Utah Valley Community College and Salt Lake Community College are located in the Salt Lake and Provo areas and began as technical colleges providing training for skilled jobs and the technical occupations. Each of the colleges was run by an independent Board of Governors and received appropriations directly from the state legislature.

Development of Community Colleges

In 1969, the state legislature placed the five community colleges under the control of the Board of Regents of the Utah System of Higher Education, which also governs the four, four-year public colleges in the state. In 1986, the Board of Regents adopted a Master Plan for Higher Education. This master plan required the conversion of the three rural junior colleges and the two metropolitan technical colleges into comprehensive community colleges offering lower division academic, vocational/technical, and continuing education courses. The Master Plan encourages the development of these comprehensive community colleges by directing a high percentage of new lower division students to them for the first two years of college. The purpose of this policy is to shift the concentration in lower division enrollment from high cost research universities to lower cost two year institutions.

Equity, access, and cost were major considerations in the development of the master plan. There is a concern that every Utah student should have access to appropriate higher education. Utah has a very high percentage of its 18-25 year olds enrolled in higher education and ranks fifth nationally in the proportion of population with bachelor degrees. Yet, most of the students are now enrolled in the University of Utah or Utah State University, both high cost research institutions. In an effort to control costs, yet provide wide access, the Board of Regents decided to develop lower-cost institutions such as the community colleges and to place an enrollment cap on the University of Utah.

All five community colleges in Utah now offer comprehensive courses in both academic and vocational/technical programs. Each also offers a complete lower division transfer program leading to enrollment in one of the state's four year institutions.

Student Enrollment Patterns

At the present time, approximately 22,000 students attend Utah's community colleges on a full- or part-time basis. This is equal to 15,740 FTE students, or about 27 percent of the FTE's in the entire Utah System of Higher Education. The 41.3 percent of the students enrolled in the academic transfer program account for 6,509 FTE's and 29 percent of the lower division students in all of Utah's colleges. Because the community colleges are the primary deliverer, a much larger portion of vocational/technical students enroll in community colleges. The 9,241 FTE's enrolled in vocational/technical programs at community colleges account for 76 percent of the state's voc-tech FTE's in higher education. There has been a shift in enrollment patterns over the past ten years. In 1978-79, 73 percent of the students in two-year colleges were enrolled in vocational/technical courses. By 1987-1988, the percentage had dropped to 58.7 percent. More students are choosing to enroll in the academic transfer program rather than the vocational/technical programs.

Identity Issues

Enrollment at the five Utah community colleges still reflects their historic mission. Students at the three rural colleges are heavily enrolled in academic course work. In the two former technical colleges, located along the Wasatch Front, 75 percent of the courses had to be vocational/technical by statute until 1987, so students continue to be heavily enrolled in vocational/technical courses.

These enrollment and course patterns lead to a different emphasis as the two former types of two-year colleges are developed into comprehensive community colleges. Vocational/technical courses must be strengthened at the rural colleges; academic course development must continue to be encouraged at the metropolitan campuses. This results in different tensions.

Faculty Tensions

There are two types of faculty tensions evident at Utah community colleges. The first is an *academic versus vocational status issue*. In institutions of higher education, there is a pecking order. This is true in community colleges as well. Many faculty see academic, transfer credit courses as more prestigious. In comprehensive institutions, there is often a tendency for academic instructors to dominate because of this status, and many, particularly vocational/technical educators, fear a drift toward academics. This fear is not a new one, as evidenced by the fact that, until recently, the legislature strictly limited the number of academic courses that could be offered in the two metropolitan colleges. With the elimination of the 75 percent requirement, and the further development of academic offerings needed to make the two metropolitan colleges more comprehensive, fears are exacerbated. There is no question that academic courses and faculty are growing rapidly at these institutions.

At the rural colleges, the fears are reversed. The academic faculty have held sway for many years, and the charge to develop a vocational technical balance is threatening as these courses get a greater share of resources.

A second tension is the *status difference between full-time and part-time faculty*. A large proportion of community college faculty are part-time. While no comprehensive system-wide data are available, in one of the large metropolitan colleges 67 percent of the faculty are part-time, and it is estimated that currently between 60 percent and 70 percent of the faculty in Utah community colleges are part-time, "adjunct" faculty. Adjunct faculty are employed for three reasons: they allow course offering flexibility, they are technically current, and they cost less. As courses and sections are needed to meet demand, instructors can be hired; if demand falls, there is no continuing employment obligation to the college. Good quality instructors can be hired out of industry who are familiar with the latest techniques and who are satisfied with a part-time assignment. Part-time instructors have no tenure and do not qualify for expensive health insurance and retirement benefits.

The trend toward use of adjunct faculty has made full-time "contract" faculty nervous because they see a threat to their jobs. In many of the colleges, this has led contract faculty to try to limit the number of adjunct faculty who may be hired. Efforts along these lines have taken two forms: limits on proportion or number and the imposition of qualifications or "standards" for appointment.

Faculty Development Opportunities

One qualifications issue of growing importance among vocational/technical faculty is currency. In many industries, technical advances are rapid, and production methods change periodically. Community college instructors must stay abreast of these developments and incorporate them into their courses if graduates are to be employable. Several of the community colleges in Utah are experimenting with sabbatical arrangements wherein vocational/technical instructors go to work in industry for a year to update their knowledge of production techniques. Different variations on this arrangement are being examined in recognition that faculty access to new knowledge is vital to the continued effectiveness of vocational programs.

Growth and Prosperity

Because of the Master Plan for Higher Education's emphasis on shifting the concentration of lower division instruction from universities to community colleges, the community colleges are experiencing a growth-driven mini-financial boom. Buildings are going up on the campuses; new faculty are being hired. There is an air of prosperity. This will continue at least until the Utah System of Higher Education attains its target of 33 percent of its enrollment on community college campuses. A recent legislative initiative to allow students to graduate early from high school and to enroll in college courses during the senior year, provides yet another challenge and another growth opportunity to the state's community colleges. Under the legislation, students may elect to accelerate high school course-taking so they can graduate after the eleventh grade. Further, community colleges and four year institutions are instructed to make provisions for students who want to take college credit courses concurrently in their senior year. As a result of this legislation, community colleges in Utah are pushing rapidly to develop concurrent course offerings which can be delivered on high school campuses. Stronger partnerships are developing between the community colleges and the surrounding high schools as the institutions work together to provide student access to local colleges.

Conclusions

These recent developments challenge the Utah community colleges to expand and diversify without losing sight of their goals. In the proliferation of courses, tensions between faculty, and attempts to balance two quite distinct educational opportunities in the same institution are the seeds of confusion. Yet, with the enrollment growth and funding attached to it, there is also the opportunity to respond to the new challenges without sacrificing the quality of existing programs. Utah's community colleges have before them an unusual opportunity to develop in an environment of increasing resources.

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Nevada's Community Colleges: Portraits of Growth and Change

Myrna Matranga

Introduction

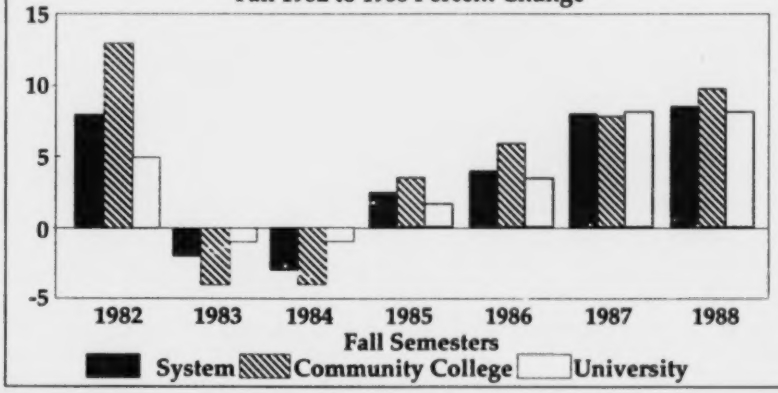
One system of higher education in Nevada encompasses both the universities and community colleges. The system is governed by an elected Board of Regents. System administration is handled by an appointed Chancellor, who serves as the board's executive officer. The nine members of the board serve for a term of six years and are elected to represent apportioned districts within the state. An important upcoming issue is the reapportionment of the jurisdiction which will occur following the 1990 census. Given the dramatic growth of Clark County, southern representation could be increased in 1991 with a possible six members from Clark County, two members from the Reno area and one member representing the remainder of the state. One challenge community colleges face relates to this dramatic shift in proportional growth throughout the state. The challenge is to continue to provide quality education not only to the more urban community college students, but also to those Nevadans who reside in the rural communities.

The Community College Campuses

There are four main community college campuses in the state: Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) in Reno, Western Nevada Community College (WNCC) in Carson City, Northern Nevada Community College (NNCC) in Elko, and Clark County Community College (CCCC) in Las Vegas. Each college also provides service through rural centers or satellite campuses which serve various local communities. As of Fall, 1988, there were 30,159 students registered statewide, with 9,285 attending on a full-time basis and 20,874 students attending part-time.

After a dramatic rise in FTE enrollment in the community colleges in 1982, an enrollment correction occurred in 1983 and 1984. Since 1985, the community college system has enjoyed consistent and steady growth. Table 1 illustrates the percent change in community college FTE enrollment as compared to the University of Nevada at Reno, University of Nevada at Las Vegas, and the system as a whole. From 1985 to 1988, with the exception of 1987, enrollment growth in the community colleges has exceeded that of the state's universities.

Table 1
Student FTE Enrollment
Fall 1982 to 1988 Percent Change



Expenditures and Growth

The cost of supporting the community colleges has increased in direct proportion to the expenditures related to program expansion and increases in faculty hirings. Expenditures overall have more than doubled during the eight year period from 1979-1980 to 1986-1987, while the number of students has increased approximately 75 percent. One explanation for the increased expenditures is the escalation of programmatic costs in the occupational education area. Effective technical/vocational programs require the consistent upgrading of both equipment and staff. Advances in technology demand the ongoing training of faculty and the replacement of outdated machinery with state-of-the-art technology. Occupational education will continue to be a costly investment for Nevada's community colleges if the programs are to remain current and effective.

Table 2 illustrates the increases in the number of faculty and students in the community college system as well as the increases in expenditure per student from 1979-1980 to 1986-1987. In 1979-1980, there were 5,838 students (FTE) and 313.6 faculty (FTE); by 1986-1987, the number of students (FTE) had increased to 7,746 and the number of faculty (FTE) to 397. In 1979-80, expenditures per student were $1,569; by 1986-87, the expenditures per student had increased to $2,979.

Student Profiles

Across the board, increases in student enrollments are occurring in all programs. The enrollment pattern has shifted from occupationally related courses to regular (liberal arts, transferable) courses. This was most significant at Western Nevada Community College where there was an 18 percent growth in both FTE and enrollment for the Fall of 1988 campus-wide and in its Fallon, Lovelock and Hawthorne centers. Student enrollment in liberal arts programs increased by 41.4 percent. According to Dr. Tony Calabro, President of WNCC, students are attending in increasing numbers on a full-time basis. The average age of

students is also beginning to decrease. Between 1986 and 1988, the average age of a student decreased from 31 to 26. This trend is in opposition to a national trend towards older students who attend community colleges on a part-time basis. One can speculate that university costs are prompting many of the 18-22 year old students to remain in their home communities for the initial two years of college before transferring to a university.

Though the number of transfer students who actually do transfer has remained fairly constant (approximately 10 percent), the statistics may change. In 1988, for example, the University of Nevada-Reno reported that out of the 1,000 students who transferred to the institution, 182 (10.1 percent) were transfers from Nevada's community colleges.

Table 2
Students Per Faculty and Expenditures Per Student for the University of Nevada System — Community Colleges Representative Fiscal Years 1980-1987

	1979-80	1981-82	1983-84	1985-86	1986-87
Faculty (FTE)	313.6	348.1	365.4	389.0	397.0
Students (FTE)	5,838	6,909	7,385	7,366	7,746
Students Per Faculty	18.6	19.9	20.2	18.9	19.5
Expenditures ($000)	9,158	14,463	17,434	21,452	23,077
Expenditures Per Students ($)	1,569	2,093	2,085	2,912	2,979

Program Offerings

Changes in program design and the expansion of curricula offerings are beginning to be seen on the different campuses. For example, Truckee Meadows Community College has expanded its program offerings in ways that make the institution further resemble a four-year college. The college has stepped up its effort to gain private funding, including the recent establishment of an endowment for the arts. Truckee is also experiencing great success in the international arena by effectively recruiting students from Taiwan, Japan, and the Philippines.

Occupational education, however, remains central to the Nevada community college mission. Vocational/technical programs continue to be responsive to Nevada's industrial needs. Partnerships with business remain active as the colleges develop "customized" training programs for employees. Recent examples of this continued partnership include: the provision of special training sessions in word processing for Washoe County employees; computer skills training for Nevada Bell; human relations training for International Gaming Technology; and individualized training for the American Institute of Banking.

Current Issues

Full-time versus Part-time Faculty. A critical policy issue for Nevada's community colleges involves the proportion of full- to part-time faculty members. For many years, part-time faculty provided the majority of instruction to students in the system. However, the over reliance on part-time faculty poses problems to the institutions in areas such as advisement and program development. Part-time faculty typically hold full-time jobs and come to campus to teach only. They are not available to spend time advising students, developing new programs, or contributing to the governance of the colleges. Their absence places an added burden on existing staff. The situation led to a legislative proposal targeting a ratio of 70 percent full-time and 30 percent part-time faculty members in the community colleges. During the 1987 legislative session, that goal was partially realized. The current ratio is about 56 percent full-time and 44 percent part-time. Continued legislative support to attain the targeted ratios during the 1989 session will be contingent upon overall state revenue and expenditures. However, legislative intent during the last session is a good indication that, if at all possible, the commitment will be realized.

Expansion of the Liberal Arts Programs. Historically, the mission of community colleges in Nevada focused on occupational education. The colleges provided the technical/vocational training students needed to attain entry level positions in the state's varied industries. However, the focus of the community college mission is changing. While occupational skill building and business partnerships will remain an integral part of the community colleges, increasing attention will be focused on the further development of the liberal arts programs. Paul Meachem, the president of Clark County Community College, recently described the blending of technology and the liberal arts as a continuum. "... On one hand, we have a critical need to expand our developmental curricula in the basics of language and literacy skills and, on the other hand, we are excited about enriching the liberal arts content with the state-of-the-art technology...." One objective for Nevada's community colleges is to further integrate the current technology into the liberal arts program.

Conclusion

Currently, the Nevada legislature is attempting to meet the growing needs of its educational constituents in the state. Competing forces are at work. The community colleges, often called the "peoples" colleges, present a formidable argument for a larger piece of the pie. Tough decisions lie ahead as the community colleges continue to be responsive to the changing needs of their students.

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